

## A140: Introduction to African American and African Diaspora Studies (3 cr.)

**Spring 2009**  
**Location: TBA**  
**Time: T.B.A.**  
**Days: T.B.A.**

**Instructor: Dr. Najja N. Modibo**  
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### **Course Description:**

The aim of this course is to introduce students to African American and African Diaspora Studies by examining the social, political, cultural, and economic experiences of people of the African Diaspora. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach, conceptual, theoretical, and analytical frameworks are drawn on to illustrate the essential interconnectedness of black people's experiences and the necessity of studying the African American and African Diaspora as a field of scholarly inquiry.

### **Course Objectives**

This course is designed to assist students in achieving the goals outlined in IUPUI's Principles of Undergraduate Learning:

### **Core Communication and Quantitative Skills**

Three two page essays will be assigned during the semester to assess the ability of students to express and interpret information and use information resources and technology. They are assigned with the express goal of developing students' basic skills to express ideas and facts to others effectively in a written format; to comprehend, interpret, and analyze ideas and facts, and identify and propose solutions for problems using sound reasoning as well as effective use of both traditional and electronic library resources.

## **Critical Thinking**

Students will engage in both formal and informal classroom discussion of assigned reading material to develop the essential skills and self-confidence to engage in a process of disciplined thinking that informs beliefs and actions. This process of critical thinking begins with the ability of students to remember and understand important course content, but is most clearly manifested when the student demonstrates the ability to apply, analyze and evaluate this knowledge, discern bias, explore new questions, and make informed decisions.

## **Integration and Application of Knowledge**

Students will be required to read, study and use information and concepts from books in AAADS as well as multiple disciplines ranging from history and literature to anthropology and sociology in this course. Five quizzes will be assigned for students to demonstrate their ability to integrate and apply the knowledge in texts from these disciplines to African American and African Diaspora Studies.

## **Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness**

Students will demonstrate a measureable increase in their knowledge and understanding of African American and African Diaspora Studies by the conclusion of this course in both their written and oral contributions. They will also be able to compare and contrast approaches to knowledge in AAADS with other more traditional disciplines.

## **Understanding Society and Culture**

Students will possess an enhanced understanding of American society and African American culture. They will also be able compare and contrast the range of diversity and universality in human history, societies, and ways of life by analyzing and understanding the interconnectedness of global and local communities which comprise the African diaspora.

## **Values and Ethics**

Students will demonstrate an ability to make informed and principled choices and to foresee consequences of these choices in both their written and oral contributions to the course. This includes--but is not limited to--punctuality, attentiveness in class, academic honesty in completing course assignments, and valuing hard work as well as showing respect for your classmates and the instructor.

## Course Policies

### *Civility Statement*

The classroom is a learning community in which we all need to collaborate in order to meet our goals. We can only create a positive learning environment through positive behavior. Rude, sarcastic, obscene, disrespectful, insensitive speech and behavior will negatively impact the classroom learning community and impede the process of learning. Positive speech and behavior create and nurture a safe learning environment where the instructor and students respect one another and freely share knowledge. All students enrolled in this class have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and positive environment conducive to learning and intellectual growth. A learning-friendly and safe environment is one that is free of distractions, engages and nurtures all participants in the learning process, does not inhibit, frustrate, demean or dehumanize any individual or group. Students who use rude and inflammatory language, who distract other students, who engage in inappropriate behavior, and thus obstruct the learning process, will be asked to leave as a first preventive step.

### *Examples of uncivil classroom behaviors:*

Tardiness, leaving class early, packing before dismissal time, eating, chewing gum, sleeping, vulgarity, sarcastic remarks or gestures, insensitive comments concerning race, ethnicity, gender, or life style, interrupting other students or instructor, not listening to other students, private conversations unrelated to the class, not paying attention, use of computer for purposes not related to the class, cell phone and pager disruptions, reading materials (e.g. newspapers) unrelated to class, cheating on exams or quizzes, demanding make-up exams, extensions, grade changes or special favors, inappropriate emails to instructor or other students.

### *Assignments*

Failure to complete the class assignments will mean an F grade for the course. All Assignments must be submitted on or before the due dates, exceptions only in extraordinary circumstances and with my prior approval. Your absence from at these times does not in itself grant you an automatic extension. Assignments must be typed, stapled, with your name and date in the footer of each page. Five points will be deducted for each class period an assignment is late. Failure to follow these instructions will be penalized a point for each infraction. **Assignments are due one week after the date of assignment, they will not be accepted after the due date. On-course/email submissions will not be accepted.**

### *Essays*

Papers are assessed for their logic, cogency, and appropriate use of sociological, economic, historical, and labor perspectives and concepts. When grading papers, comparisons are inevitable. This means that an **A** paper is qualitatively better than a **B** paper, which is better than a **C** paper. The difference may lie in the fact that one paper is more factually comprehensive than another, argues its case more persuasively, is better organized, contains fewer errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation, or is simply a more literate, polished piece of work. All papers must be in paper copy format and handed to me on the due date.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you are unsure about the university's policy on plagiarism go to the following web site:

Htm1 <http://www.education.indiana/frick/plagiarism/item1>

### *Presentations*

In assessing informal oral contributions, I will listen for thoughtful, insightful remarks that occur on a regular basis. For formal oral presentations, assessment criteria include the abilities to sustain dialogue, to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter, to zero in on the main points and to display a capacity for effective synthesis and analysis.

### *Attendance*

It is extremely important that you attend class regularly and on time. As this is an interactive learning course, you are expected to participate in discussion. Clearly, you cannot participate in discussion if you are absent. You will be allowed three absences without penalty. Thereafter, excessive absences will cause your final grade to be lowered – please inform me of extenuating circumstances such as serious illness or other relevant emergencies. For example please be prepared to produce a doctor's note or such documentation to ensure excused absences. Excuses such as I overslept, I was finishing my homework and time got away, or my room mate turned off the alarm clock are not acceptable.

### *Policy Regarding People with Disabilities*

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis is committed to the spirit and letter of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These laws provide a clear and comprehensive mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Together, they require equal treatment of persons with disabilities in employment, public services and transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications services, and include an obligation to provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified individuals with disabilities.

## **Course Requirements and Grading**

The following is the grade scale I will use:

A+ 98, A 93, A- 90, B+ 88, B 83, B- 80, C+ 78, C 73, C- 70, D+ 68, D 63, D- 60.

**Your performance in this course will be guided by the following standard criteria for a total of 700 points.**

|                               |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Class attendance</b>       | <b>100 points</b> |
| <b>Presentation</b>           | <b>200 points</b> |
| <b>First Essay Assignment</b> | <b>200 points</b> |
| <b>Final Essay Assignment</b> | <b>200 points</b> |

When writing assignments are given, they are due the following week. All papers must be sent via On-Course, titles, numbered pages, and the name of the person that is submitting the assignment must also be placed on each assignment. Student must have access to Microsoft Word.

### **Required Texts:**

Hine, Darlene Clark, Jacqueline McLeod (eds). Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in the Diaspora, Indiana University Press, 2001.

Fanon, Frantz. Black Skin White Masks. Grove Press, 2007 .

Pieterse, Jan Nederveen. White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992

Rodney, Walter. How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, Howard University Press, 1981.

Roediger, David R. Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to Be White, New York: Schocken Books, 1998.

Readings identified by an asterisk (\*) will be available online. Readings with two asterisks (\*\*) will be available for purchase at the book store.

### **Assigned Readings/Activities**

#### **Week One: The Diaspora as a Concept**

##### **Class One:**

- Introductions and expectations
- Concepts and terminology

Holt, Thomas, C. Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World: Reflections on the Diasporan Framework.” In Hine, Darlene Clark and Jacqueline McLeod, Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora.

**Class Two:**

Skinner, E. “Hegemonic Paradigms and the African World: Striving to be Free.” In Darlene Clark Dine and Jacqueline McLeod (eds.) Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora.

**Week Two:**

**Class One:**

\*Bulter, K. “From Black History to Diasporian History: Brazilian Abolition in Afro-Atlantic.” Context, African Studies Review, Vol. 43. No. 1, (Apr., 2000), pp. 125-139.

**Class Two:**

\*Lake, O. “Towards a Pan-African Identity: Diaspora African Repatriates in Ghana.” Anthropology Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (Jan., 1995), pp. 21-36.

**Week Three: Europe’s Dark Continent**

**Class One:**

\*Pieterse, Jan. N. “Imagery of Eurocentrism.” In Jan N. Pieterse’s White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture.

**Class Two:**

\*Pieterse, Jan. N. “Imagery of Eurocentrism.” In Jan N. Pieterse’s White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture.

**Week Four: Africa’s role in World Trade**

**Class One:**

Rodney, Walter. “Some Questions on Development.” In Walter Rodney’s How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.

**Class Two: Paper to be assigned**

Rodney, Walter. "How Africa Developed before the Coming of the Europeans-Up to the Fifteenth Century." In Walter Rodney's How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.

**Week Five:**

**Class One:**

Rodney, Walter. "Africa's Contribution to European Capitalist Development-The Pre-Colonial Period." In Walter Rodney's How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.

**Class Two:**

Rodney, Walter. "Europe and the Roots of African Underdevelopment to 1885." In Walter Rodney's How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.

**Week Six:**

**Class One:**

Fanon, Frantz. "The Negro and Language." In F. Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks.

**Class Two:**

Fanon, Frantz. "The So-Called Dependency Complex of Colonized Peoples." In F. Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks.

**Week Seven:**

**Class One:**

Fanon, Frantz. "The Fact of Blackness." In F. Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks.

**Class Two:**

W.E.B. Du Bois "Dialogue with a White Friend." In David R. Roediger's Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to be White.

## **Week Eight:**

### **Class One:**

Morrison, Toni. "From Playing in the Dark." In David R. Roediger's Black on White: Black Writers on What It means to be White.

### **Class Two:**

Baldwin, James. "On Being "White." In David R. Roediger's Black on White: Black Writers on What It means to be White.

## **Week Nine: The Diasporic Experience**

### **Class One:**

\*Reddock, R. "Women's Organization and Movement in the Commonwealth Caribbean: The Response to Global Economic Crisis in the 1980's." Feminist Review, No. 59, (Summer, 1998), pp. 57-73,

### **Class Two:**

\*Byron, J. and D. Thornburn. "Gender and International Relations: A Global Economic Crisis in the 1980's." Feminist Review, No. 59. (Summer 1998), pp. 57-73.

## **Week Ten:**

### **Class One:**

\*Marah, J. K. "Educational Adaption and Pan-Africanism: Developmental Trends in Africa." Journal of Black Studies, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Jun., 1987), pp. 461-481.

### **Class Two:**

\*Graham, M, and G. Robinson. "The Silent Catastrophe": Institutional Racism in the British Educational System and the Underachievement of Black Boys." Journal of Black Studies, Vol. 34, No. 5. (May, 2004), pp. 653-671.

## **Week Eleven:**

### **Class One:**

\*Jackson, V. J. and Mary E. Cothran. "Black versus Black: The Relationship Among African, African Americans, and African Caribbean Persons." Journal of Black Studies, Vol. 33. No. 5. (May 2003), pp. 576-604.

### **Class Two:**

Fredrickson, G. "Reform and Revolution in American and South African Freedom Struggle." In Darlene Clark and Jacqueline McLeod (eds.) Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora.

## **Week Twelve:**

### **Class One:**

(\*\*) Ekeli, Peter P. "Kinship and State in African and African American Histories." In Isidore Oksidore, Carole B. Davies, and Ali A. Mazrui (eds.) The African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities.

### **Class Two:**

(\*\*) Blocker, Jack S. "Wages of Migration: Jobs and Homeownership among Black and White Workers in Muncie, Indiana, 1920." In Isidore Oksidore, Carole B. Davies, and Ali A. Mazrui (eds.) The African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities.

## **Week Thirteen:**

### **Class One:**

\*Hodgson, Dorothy L. and Sheryl McCurdy. "Wayward Wives, Misfit Mothers, and Disobedient Daughters: "Wicked" Women and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa." Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 30, No. 1.

### **Class Two:**

\*Geisler, G. "Parliament is Another Terrain of Struggle: Women, Men and politics in South Africa." The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 38, No. 4.

## **Week Fourteen:**

### **Class One:**

(\*\*)Bogle, Donald. "The 1970s: Bucks and a Black Movie Boom." In Donald Bogle's Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies, & Bucks: An Interpretative History of Blacks in American Film.

### **Class Two:**

(\*\*)Bogle, Donald. "The 1980s: Black Superstars and the Era of Tan." In Donald Bogle's Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies, & Bucks: An Interpretative History of Blacks in American Film.

## **Week Fifteen: Final Essay to be assigned**

### **Class One:**

\*Emerson, R.A. "Where My Girls At?" Negotiating Black Womanhood in Music Videos." Gender and Society, Vol, Vol. 16, No. 1. (Feb.,) 2002), pp. 115-135.

### **Class Two:**

Review of the term  
Student Evaluations